

**WILLIAMSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
2005 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PUBLIC FORUM #5
Thursday, November 18, 2004**

A Community Conversation on the Comprehensive Plan was held by the Williamsburg Planning Commission on Thursday, November 18, 2004, at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Building, 401 North Boundary Street.

ATTENDANCE AND CALL TO ORDER

Present were Commissioners Young, Pons, Hertzler, McBeth and Rose. Commissioners Friend and Smith were absent. Also present were Planning Director Nester, Zoning Administrator Murphy and Codes Compliance Administrator Catlett.

Mr. Young called the meeting to order, and welcomed the approximately 35 citizens in attendance, and introduced the Planning Commission members and staff who were present.

Mr. Nester made brief introductory comments, discussing 2000 Census information for the City, land uses, owner and renter occupied residential buildings, and noted that the major issues to be discussed at the meeting would include: Housing - Pressures on residential areas adjacent to the College and potentials for residential redevelopment in the City Square and South Henry Street areas; Commercial - Are the City's current regulations too restrictive, not restrictive enough, or about right to preserve the character of the Center City area and encourage economic development; and Infrastructure - Are there street, pedestrian or bicycle improvements that should be given a high priority in the Center City area.

Housing Issues, facilitated by Joe Hertzler

John Digges, 512 South Henry Street

- Densities need to be increased, subject to a special use permit
- Use floor area ratio instead of units/acre to encourage larger units

David Kranbuehl, 201 Harrison Avenue

- City needs more permanent residents, people who spend money and pay significant taxes to the City
- Don't need efficiencies, but housing that attracts permanent residents

Oscar Blayton, 115 Chinkapin Lane

- Several corrections needed on housing inventory for Braxton Court
- Why was Braxton Court combined with the commercial area across Scotland Street when statistics were compiled

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Stewart Goddin, 715 Goodwin Street

- The discussion should have started with the vision for the Center City
- Part of the City's charm is the small town atmosphere – how big do we want the area to become
- Very dense housing does not make for a walkable community
- Need more housing for permanent residents. Weekend residents do not have the same concern for the community
- Size of units is important – how many units do we want to pack in – we don't want all efficiencies
- There could be a higher density on the fringes of the downtown area
- ARB rules need to be enforced

Flora Adams, 715 Goodwin Street

- Concerned with the lack of green space in the downtown area

Tom Mainor, 506 Newport Avenue

- Walkability is a plus for the downtown area
- Need to maintain the College town character
- We can become so attractive that we loose the quality that makes us attractive

Charles Wydner, 24 Mile Course

- Expresses questions/concerns about redevelopment along South Henry Street – Mr. Nester replies that private redevelopment is being considered, not redevelopment by the City

Andrew Edwards, 800 South Henry Street

- Concerned about increasing the density on South Henry Street
- Advocates continuing single family dwellings in the South Henry Street area

Robert Singley, RJS Associates, 423 North Boundary Street

- Need to provide economic incentives to encourage redevelopment of housing in the downtown area
- Increasing density to 22 units/acre would allow up to four units on second floors for buildings on small lots

Commercial Issues, facilitated by Doug Pons

Eric Weaver, 520 South Henry Street

- Need to think about keeping green space in the Center City area

John Digges, 512 South Henry Street

- Need to recycle derelict properties
- Economic incentives needed to prevent further decay

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Stewart Goddin, 715 Goodwin Street

- What's the trade off between maximum dollars for redevelopment (e.g. more units) versus services provided by the City
- Making clear the desire for vibrant single family areas will encourage renovation as single family

David Kranbuehl, 201 Harrison Avenue

- People want more green space downtown, and higher density can be provided around green space
- Residents of the City take the long term perspective
- More is not necessarily better and more lucrative – Colonial Williamsburg has made the decision to go for quality rather than quantity

Pat Gibbs, 630 Counselor's Way

- Downtown commercial development should address the needs of students as well as permanent residents – an important issue since we no longer have a pharmacy downtown

Kelly Porell, 321 North Henry Street, College student

- 5500 undergraduates and 2000 graduate students at the College, generating a need for businesses in walking distance
- Downtown businesses serving day to day needs are a common need for both students and permanent downtown residents

Tom Mainor, 506 Newport Avenue

- A small "Fresh Market" within walking distance of the downtown would make a lot of sense

David Kranbuehl, 201 Harrison Avenue

- May not need as much off-street parking for businesses serving the students

Eric Weaver, 520 South Henry Street

- Need to enforce building codes – buildings need to be kept in reasonable shape – more enforcement needed

Infrastructure, facilitated by Elaine McBeth

John Digges, 512 South Henry Street

- Put the roundabout idea in a round file beside the desk
- Reconstruct the traffic island at College Corner into a European-style island (e.g. North England Street and Lafayette Street)

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Citizen

- Sidewalks needed on Scotland Street adjacent to College Delly – Mr. Nester responded that this will be a part of the WRHA Braxton Court CDBG project

Flora Adams, 715 Goodwin Street

- Supports underground wiring, but opposed if it requires trenching close to trees, which can harm the trees – boring is a better alternative

Tom Mainor, 506 Newport Avenue

- Underground wiring will save money in the long term

Stewart Goddin, 715 Goodwin Street

- Asked of there are critical points to be addressed as populations grows, such as need for new fire station, new City Hall – Mr. Nester replied that these items are looked at on a continual basis, and need to be factored into future growth and future character of the City

Sharon Scruggs, 119 Woodmere Court

- City needs to connect the Delly area with the Merchants Square area by better lighting, better sidewalks (brick) – Prince George, Scotland, and Richmond Road

Flora Adams, 715 Goodwin Street

- A better job needs to be done with recycling
- Is there a mechanism for the City to do the trash collection instead of contracting it out

David Kranbuehl, 201 Harrison Avenue

- Wider sidewalk needed along Richmond Road from the Hospitality House to College Corner, and it should be brick – this should be one of the highest Capital Improvement Plan priorities

Stewart Goddin, 715 Goodwin Street

- Better pedestrian connections needed to support student oriented businesses in the downtown areas

College Student

- Sorority Court crosswalk has terrible lighting
- Crosswalk to WaWa should be from the Bryan Complex instead of from Blow Hall – this is where the majority of students cross
- A roundabout at College Corner would create problems for bicyclists

Vision for the Center City Area, facilitated by Jesse Young

John Digges, 512 South Henry Street

- What does it take for the City to renew itself – need to take it a piece at a time, and it needs to make sense – use permits are a good way to do it

Tom Mainor, 506 Newport Avenue

- Concerned with the hospital as a health care resource – we need to look at long range planning for health care in the area

Scotland Street resident

- Rehabilitation incentives should be provided for property owners

Pat Gibbs, 630 Counselor's Way

- City should continue to offer housing opportunities for people of all income levels, and should explore ways to encourage housing diversity

Charles Wydner, 24 Mile Course

- More timely repairs should be made to existing roads

Mr. Young thanked citizens for attending and discussing issues with the Planning Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 8:05.m.

Jesse Young, Chairman
Williamsburg Planning Commission